

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATIONS PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

November 20, 2014

Town Hall – Main Level Helen Nelson Conference Room

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

- I. Town Hall Walk Through – the Committee, NCTV and the public toured the building to receive a better understanding of both the layout of the building and the current conditions. Dr. Collins conducted the tour of the Board of Education spaces and Mr. Langdon conducted the tour of the general government areas of the building. The tour made stops at the Helen Nelson Room, the upper level East and West Penthouses, upper level offices, the Transition Academy, Human Capital Development, the gymnasium, the water main area under the gymnasium, the Teen Center and emergency generator room, the corridor by Human Services, the auditorium, the steam tunnel under the Town Clerk's Office and auditorium, and the boiler room. Graphic presentations prepared by Dr. Collins and Mr. Langdon were made available to the public upon return to the Helen Nelson Room. These are also available on the Town's website.
- II. Call to Order –the meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Chairperson Bongiovanni.
- III. Roll Call – Members present: Alan Bongiovanni, Chairperson; Jim Marocchini; Dave Nagel; Rodney Mortensen, Jane Murphy and Whit Przech. Others present: Members of the public; Sarah Jorgensen; Dave Langdon, Director of Facilities Management; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- IV. Public Participation – Steven Silvia, 45 Basswood Street. He expressed his gratitude for the Committee's efforts. He would like to help. He is an architect and an engineer and is licensed with the State. He would like to see the Committee find a successful solution.

Mady Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive. She requested that the members of the Committee identify themselves and the skills they have that will be of particular help with the project. She suggested that brief biographies be posted on the Town's website and that an article be placed in the Town Crier.

- V. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Mr. Mortensen made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2014 meeting as presented. A second to the motion was made by Mr. Marocchini. The motion passed by a vote of 5 YES to 0 NO with Mr. Bongiovanni abstaining (unable to review prior to the meeting).
- VI. Focus Groups Update – presented by Mr. Baron. Three focus group meetings were held the week of Veteran’s Day. There were a variety of ideas that were discussed in the more than 12 hours of conversation. The facilitator, Decision Point LLC, is preparing a written report that will be distributed to the Committee and the Town Council. It is anticipated by December 1st.
- VII. Town Hall Configuration – Mr. Langdon distributed floor plans showing the current layout of offices at Town Hall, and a site plan showing an aerial view of the Town campus on the south side of Cedar Street. The entire building is approximately 92,000 square feet. Mr. Baron distributed sections of the space needs study performed by Kaestle Boos Associates in 2009. The narratives for the offices which have since moved to the Lower Level of Town Hall were removed. An analysis was included along with that study showing the net usable square footage for each department. It showed the actual square footage in 2009, what the anticipated need was in 2009, and the anticipated need in 2013 when each department’s needs were re-visited. Further revisions took place prior to the final design in 2014 but were not tabulated.
- VIII. Discussion Regarding Professionals – The Chair noted that the previous Project Building Committee had obtained the services of an architect and a construction manager. Kaestle Boos Associates, as Project Architect, had received \$51,067 as their base fee and, with flybys and an enhanced level of design, a total of \$138,217.50. Downes Construction’s fee for construction manager pre-referendum services was \$31,790. Mr. Bongiovanni felt that a decision on a construction manager could wait, but that the Committee needed to determine how to proceed on a decision regarding the architect. He would like to look at the plans drawn up by Kaestle Boos Associates for the referendum. Mr. Marocchini noted that a new plan will be needed since the last referendum failed. He also thought the Committee should familiarize themselves with the old plans. Mr. Mortensen felt that the Committee should look at the plans with the architect. Ms. Jorgensen stated her belief that there was enough space at the Town Hall to accommodate two gyms. Mr. Bongiovanni observed that if space and money are at a premium, the Committee may have to use the space currently occupied by the auditorium. The Committee directed Mr. Baron to invite Kaestle Boos Associates to make a presentation on the Town Hall renovation that was proposed for the referendum and any other ideas they may have had from earlier plans that didn’t make it to referendum. Mr. Langdon noted that Kaestle Boos has a good insight to the building, not only from their recent efforts but also from their design of the current Town Hall configuration in 1972.

- IX. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – The Committee members introduced themselves and stated their relevant experience. Alan Bongiovanni is the Chairperson, has lived in Newington for 28 years, is a licensed land surveyor, has a degree in Architecture/Engineering, served as Project Building Committee Chairperson for several school related committees over a 12-14 year period, and works on construction projects on a daily basis. Whit Przech was a Facilities Manager at All State for 25 years, plus 6 years at another firm, and is now the Facilities Manager for the Town of Windsor. Rodney Mortensen is the former Mayor, served as ex officio on all Committees during that time, has been involved with many Town budgets, and has been involved with construction projects on his own. Sarah Jorgensen's father was the largest union contractor in the state, attended many construction meetings with her father, is now a financial consultant, stock broker, and parent, and was part of the Save Mill Pond Park organization. Dave Nagel is a member of the Town Council, has lived in Town for 31 years, served on several project building committees, has been active on community theater projects, has been involved with Town budgets, and was a teacher. Jane Murphy has raised three children and lived in Town for 17 years, worked for ten years for Toys R Us and Babies R Us, both building and closing stores, and is a Finance Manager now. Jim Marocchini is on the Town Council and is a Project Manager for Pioneer Builders, a family owned commercial construction contractor who has successfully completed a number of interior renovation projects. Providing staff liaison to the Committee are Jeff Baron and Dave Langdon. Dave Langdon's background is in mechanical engineering and HVAC (heating, ventilating and air conditioning), he is the Town's Director of Facilities Management, having worked previously for the City of Waterbury and School Regional District 16.

The Committee agreed to hold their next meeting on December 2nd at 6:00 PM. The Committee anticipates holding future meetings on Tuesdays and intends to vary the meeting start times. Mr. Mortensen asked what anticipated date for a referendum the Committee was shooting for. The Chair responded that the Committee was targeting next fall for a referendum if it could reasonably do so.

- X. Public Participation – Steven Silvia, 45 Basswood Street. He thanked the Committee for the documents distributed earlier. He would be curious to obtain a needs analysis. If his calculations are correct, the 2009 study works out to 480 square feet per person, well above the commercial standard. This would present lots of opportunities. He asked what the requirements were that were given to the architect. He thanked the Committee for the tour of the building. He served on one of the focus groups. One of the points brought out in his focus group was that there was a lack of communication on what the Town intended to do prior to the last referendum.

Gail Budrejko, 21 Isabelle Terrace. She suggested that the Committee pursue an environmental specialist study. The presence of hazardous materials could impact costs. It is not too early to hire this specialist. She asked if a “not to exceed” figure or budget amount had been given to the Committee.

Mady Kenny, 52 Crestview Drive. She felt microphones were needed so the public could hear the Committee members more easily. She was also on a focus group. It was felt that communication prior to the last referendum was a one way street. Residents have a responsibility to attend meetings and to speak out. The public got involved only after Facebook became active. Meeting notices should be posted in the Town Crier.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive. She was also on a focus group where communication was discussed. The Committee could give information to reporters. Only a handful of the public attended Building Committee meetings earlier. The Committee needs to get information out. She asked if the Committee will have a separate building. It is not clear to her what direction the Committee is going in now. She was surprised at how late the public became involved on the earlier proposed project.

- XI. Response to Public Participation – The Chair stated that the Committee should have a better understanding of what hazardous materials are present and what their magnitude is. He asked staff for the cost for an industrial hygienist to determine that. The Committee can test for PCBs, lead paint, mercury and asbestos without having to abate immediately. As to the budget, no budget amount has been provided but all the members are taxpayers and all are conscious that the cost of the project will be a concern. Mr. Mortensen responded regarding notices to the public. The public is encouraged to attend the Committee’s meetings. The minutes are on line on the Town’s website. Mr. Baron will ask Channel 14 if they would televise meetings. Ms. Jorgensen stated that the Save Mill Pond Park site has 1,800 people. The Committee could ask people for their feedback. People have suggestions but can’t necessarily make it to a meeting. The Chair stated that the Committee was not at the point yet to determine if there will be one building site or not. That is a goal, to get to that point. Mr. Nagel observed that the Committee had been given a mission to look at the current Town Hall site and to renovate the Town Hall. The Committee is not intending to look at anything other than renovation of the current site.

- XII. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baron
Director of Administrative Services